

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 and 28-33 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 7 and 28 have been amended herein to further emphasize aspects of applicants' claimed subject matter. A version of all pending claims can be located at pages 2-6 of this Reply. Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 1-14, 21, 22, and 28 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-14, 21, 22, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Release 8.0 of the Workflow Template software product publicly available from Template Software, Inc. in 1998 as evidenced by "Using the WFT Development Environment", 1998 in view of "XML based Process Management Standard launched by Workflow Management Coalition – 'Wf-XML'," July 7, 1999 [online], accessed 01/03/2006, Workflow Management Coalition, URL:<http://www.wfmc.org/pr/pr1999-07-07.pdf>, 4 pages. This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. The primary and secondary documents, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest each and every aspect recited in the subject claims.

To reject claims in an application under §103, an examiner must establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. A *prima facie* case of obviousness is established by a showing of three basic criteria. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. See MPEP §706.02(j). The teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination and the reasonable expectation of success must both be found in the prior art and not based on applicant's disclosure. See *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

Applicants' claimed subject matter relates to a system and method for modeling business workflow processes based on process algebra and reducing the model to a useful

programming language for use in real world applications. To this end, independent claim 1 (and similarly independent claims 7 and 28) recites: *dividing the reduced business process into at least one independent transaction and at least one parent interdependent transaction, **the at least one parent interdependent transaction comprises two or more non-uniform child interdependent transactions.*** The primary and secondary documents do not, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest these exemplary features of applicants' claimed subject matter.

The primary document discloses a Workflow Design Editor (WDE) that enables one to design a workflow system at a high level. In particular, the Examiner contends that the primary document provides a copy flow facility that divides a reduced business process into at least one independent transaction and at least one parent interdependent transaction. While the copy flow facility appears to provide for dividing a reduced business process into independent transactions and interdependent transactions, it is submitted that the cited document, and specifically, the copy flow facility, does not teach or suggest dividing the reduced business process into one or more independent transaction and one or more parent interdependent transaction wherein the one or more interdependent parent transaction comprises two or more non-uniform or disparate interdependent transactions as recited in the subject claims. Rather the cited document specifically states "[a] copy flow is a single flow that splits into two or more flows. ... An exact copy of the work item or work item set is sent to each destination task." (See page 3-20). Implicit therein is the fact that while the copy facility provided by the cited document might divide the business process into independent and interdependent parent transactions, the facility is incapable of further dividing the interdependent parent transaction into one or more disparate, non-uniform, pluralistic child interdependent transactions. The claimed subject matter in contrast is capable of dividing a reduced business transaction into a plurality of independent transactions and one or more interdependent parent transactions wherein the one or more interdependent parent transactions can comprise a plurality of non-identical child interdependent transactions.

Moreover the Examiner acknowledges that the primary document does not teach or suggest the programming language having XML syntax. Consequently, in order to rectify this deficiency the Examiner offers the secondary document. The secondary

document provides a draft specification relating to the provision of XML-based exchanges between workflow systems. The secondary document however does not cure the elucidated deficiency with respect to the primary document. In particular, the secondary document does not teach or suggest ***at least one parent interdependent transaction comprises two or more non-uniform child interdependent transactions.*** Accordingly, since applicants' claimed subject matter is patentably distinguishable from the primary and secondary documents, withdrawal of this rejection with respect to independent claims 1, 7 and 28 (and associated dependent claims) is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection of Claims 15-20 and 29-33 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 15-20 and 29-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Template in view of Wf-XML-99, as applied to claims 1 and 12 above, and further in view of Chen *et al.* (US 5,940,839). This rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. Claims 15-20 and 29-33 depend from independent claims 7 and 28 respectively, and Chen *et al.* does not remedy the aforementioned deficiencies with respect to the primary and secondary documents and the respective independent claims. Chen *et al.* relates to systems and methods for recovering from failures in transactions in nested transactional structures. The cited tertiary document however does not teach or suggest the at least one parent interdependent transaction comprises two or more non-uniform child interdependent transactions. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP101US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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